Dear Roger, 6/17/93

I fear we all goofed in not being thoroughly prepared for Connally's death, I in particular. We should have anticipated his impending death and have addressed Reno as you did in the statement you were going to issue after his death. That was a fine statement with the perfect lead. That I was preoccupied with many other matters does not excuse my not having given Connally's coming death thought and been prepared for it with people I know in the media and by writing Reno in advance.

Lardner did succeed in getting more, much more space than he'd told me he was getting.

I realized the mistake when I awakened yesterday morning. I then phoned Lardner at his home well before the time he usually leaves for the paper. But yesterday he had to leave early and it was late in the day when he got to his office. When he phoned me (I'd left a message on his machine) he'd heard from Jim and had spoken to him and was awaiting a fax of that statement. From Lardner's story I fear that Jim and Cyril did not take the right approach in emphasizing that recovering the fragments from Connally's body would disprove the Report.

When Lardner indicated that the most he would get is about two inches I phoned a friend who is one of the editors of the local papers. I told him I was not interested in a local story but wanted a feed to AP. I believe they offered it but do not know. The reporter who interviewed my by phone took the lead I prefer, that the national inyerest requires the recovery of the evidence in Connally's body whatever it shows. I enclose it. I believe they remade the front page to place the story there.

My early-morning walking is near the local CBS affiliate. I went there before daylight. The night man substituted a couple of minutes of me for something scheduled and I used the DJ statement that it would let the Dallas FBI decided whether recovering that evidence is "important" to charge that the DJ was putting the fox to guard the chickenhouse and abdicated its own responsibilities. I said that if the evidence was not recovered it would create a new and unnecessary national scandal, that it would spawn new conspiracy theories, and as the paper quoted me, this time they would be justified.

I had told the people at the station that I was there hoping for a network feed. The person who decides that was not yet there but it is to be suggested. Whether or not CBS news accepts it is, of course, a separate matter. If they do they'll not use all I was able to air but I did say that the nurse who gave the fragments removed from Connally's body to the federals consistently described a greater volume than the FBI gave the Commission, that the Commission's fragements do not equal their official descriptions, which raises additional questions about the FBI given the authority to decide whether the fragments in Connally are "important," and a few other things like these.

As always the reporters were interested in the single-bullet theory. I did not volunteer any of that other than saying that the fragments should be recovered, weighed, measured and if necessary (which it is of for other reasons) tested by NAA. I tried to emphasize the nature of the crime vital evidence of which migh be forever denied and the spawning of theories.

On the 10 a.m. news CBS quoted AARC only on the argument of the dependability of the Report.

Before then the managing editor of the local paper is considering a followup using the reporter (excluded) who reports to work at 2 p.m. He has not ruled out a story showing the importance of those Connally fragments that, according to that CBS newscast is to be buried this afternoon. As I write this the nearest AP reporter, in Hagerstown, is writing her story based on that in the local paper plus what I suggested to her when I phoned her. She also is considering a ~~fin~~ followup of the nature above. If she gets her story filed in time she is coming here for lunch with us. If not she'll phone and will come later. I have already gotten relevant pictures out for them, none ever used in the papers of on TV, plus a tabulation of the fragment weights ~~are~~ as given by Frazier and as posted during the NAAS. The fragments grew larger! Of course I have no idea what they will file or whether what they'll file will be carried. (She came and I loaded her up.)

Going along with this Lil is not copying Lardner's story on Guinn's HSCA post-testimony interview that the egomaniaical Lifton in his persistence in trying to make his theory he knew was a fraud seem reasonable interrupted. I'd asked Lardner to ask Guinn if he had validated the specimens he tested. Guinn said he could not validate them and that they did not match their offical description. Lifton then interrupted on his own irrational agenda. I have a dub of the tape Lifton made. Or, his insane effort to make what he knew was false true, blocked the development of more significant information. He just talked over the press, into whose conference he brazenly intruded, as he had pretty much throughout the whole thing.

I'll add to this later. Or 3:10. Nothing on 3:00 CBS net news and AP story to be filed in an hour, too close. We worked during lunch, too. And it left me tired. When the local reporter learned she was to do a followup and asked if a(T later because she has so many stories started and needing to be finished I ~~really~~ readily agree to next week. First I am tired and second the stage set by the attention to the fragments disprove INB the Warren Report, without any proof, is not the setting I prefer. So, we'll see.

How I wish I had the appropriate part of the Bell transcript you said you's send me! I can use it very effectively next week, perhaps Monday (at 10:30) when the local reporter is here. AP gets all their stories and pix. The AP area reporter was working on it before I called her, but as a rewrite of what the local published only. I asked the ME if you could fax it to him for us at the paper and for me, and he agreed. 301/662-8299, to Mike Powell. PLEASE!

With more than four of five not believing the Report I wonder how much impact the AARC angle has on editors and people in general.

Resumed 2:10 a.m. 6/18. I was so tired I decided to stop and take a nap. I was barely asleep when I was phoned by Jonathan Meyers, from the AARC. In Jim's absence he wanted to know if I'd make radio broadcasts by phone. I said I would until my present early beddtime. He also asked if I would tell Oliver Stone's unnamed assistant if I would tell him what to

do, etc. I said I doubted they would call but I'd help as best I could. They did not call. Nor did anyone for a radio broadcast. Perhaps that is because Connally was buried. And it remains to be seen whether that kills the AP story for which I had that reporter well prepared with fact, as about fragment weights and the fact of the disappearance of the actual fragments and their replacement, with which the government and HSCA got away.

Meyers told me that ABC-TV was interested and that on a night program Tink Thompson would appear. I rode the local "news" broadcasts and two Washington stations had items on the AARC letter. They were short, unexciting but not bad. Then I switched from one to another of the net newscasts. Not CBS, between NBC and ABC, I thus spotted the Ted Koppel iteme, not short and perhaps a bit lengthy on this AARC demand for the recovery of the fragments in Connally's body.

Derisively it referred to that who wrote the letter as "conspiracy theorists" and what it aired of Lesar and Wecht ~~were~~ was selected to support that angle. As I recall, neither was named. They also had dim supposed and really meaningless pictures of what were said to be fragments in Connally's thigh, I do not recalll the second but do not recall it was of the one in his chest, from a book, perhaps Thompson's. What was used of Lesar was him saying that the fragments could prove by chemical tests that there had been a conspiracy. Cyril was seen saying with emotion that the demand for the recovery of those fragments is not some emotional exercise but the "real game," the "whole game." As I said earlier, entirely the wrong approach.

It also showed the Dallas FBI SAC xaying that he was all for the fragment recovery. As he certainly was safe in saying when he knew that the Connally family was strongly opposed to it. The brother was shown saying that firmly and with some emotion. So the way it was rigged, the FBI had the biggest ever Texas cowboy white hat on.

If the Howard statement from Dallas got any attention at all I am not aware of it. Coming from them I doubt it would outside perhaps of Dallas. They have no credibility at all and from my contacts with them deserve none.

There is no real point served in trying to assess why we failed. It is inevitable. In large part it is the corrupt media's attitude and in large part it is the justified contempt for "conspiracy theorists." Where this can be overcome, as I was able to with the AP reporter yesterday, who happens to have met me and to know ~~me~~ some ~~and~~ mind about me ~~more,~~ there remains the desk problem and all the desks have been corrupted by the outpouring of all the zany conspiracy theories. I doubt if any has been as harmful as Liftons, with Livingstone's second. I think it will be a very unusual situation when the desk and top echelon prejudices will be overcome. It might have been yesterday with a different approach, like the excellent one you read to me before Connally's death was announced, or the one I took with the local papers. Whose reporting is coming Monday morning. What the prospects are or can be for exhumation we can't tell but the prospectes are slighter that had we been prepared before death or with a different approach after it.

Harold